(3)

A SERMON ON LUKE 11. 13,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED SEVERAL APHORISMS ON DIFFERENT SUBJECTS,

By a HEARER OF THE APOSTLES.

LUKE 16. 31. "*If they hear not Moses and the Prophets neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.*"

CHESTER,
PRINTED BY P. BROSTER.

This World Is Not A Christians Home
Nay look Not For That Above
Their Treasures In The World To Come
There Nothing Dwells But Love
Man's Born To Trouble Here On Earth
As Sparks To Upward Fly
He From The Moment of His Birth
Begins Here Sin & Die
He In The Midst of Life's In Death
He's Here no Certain Stay
When yet Shall Decay His Breath
Down falls The feible Clay
Like the grass To day is Green
And flourish grow and Spread
Tomorrow Cut Down & Dead
So Dies the Sinners Vain

BRITISH MUSEUM
12
LFP

LUKE 11. 13. *If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your Children; how much more ſhall your heavenly Farther, give the holy Spirit to them that aſk Him?——compare* MAT. 7. 11.

THERE is ſcarcely any paſſage ſince the Apoſtles time more generally miſtaken or wreſted than this: down from the † Maternal Houſe of Rome, through her many lewd Daughters even to the loweſt Claſs of Diſſenters it is ſuppoſed to countenance them in praying for the Spirit in the ſenſe it did the Apoſtles; or at leaſt, they hope to attain it either by right of ‡ ſucceſſion or divine inſpiration as the Apoſtles did. And no ſooner are they in their own imagination poſſeſſed of this; but they ſet up for Dictators, and would palm on us for Oracles, either their clerical dogmas, or enthuſiaſtic Dreams. And however the Chriſtian (or rather the Antichriſtian) World may differ about the mode of things, yet they agree in the main of their Oppoſition to the word of God, and work of Chriſt, that the former is not ſufficient to give us an underſtanding; and the latter not ſufficient to ſave without the cooperation of human endeavours. The word of God is a divine aſſiſtance to believe, and alone ſufficient to give us an underſtanding ſee John 20. 31. They who deny this, do in effect deny the ſufficiency of Chriſt, and the work he finiſhed on the Croſs to ſave; as it is only by the former, we know any thing of the latter.

God gave his Spirit to inſtruct his people of Old, *Neh.* 9. 20. but the way and manner he did it *Ver.* 30. was by his Spirit ſpeaking " *in his Prophets,* " ſo now, he has given his Spirit to inſtruct us; but it ſpeaks only in the Prophets, our Lord, and his Apoſtles. He gave

† See the common Maſs Book page 188, and 189.

‡ The true Miniſters of Chriſt do not pretend to ſucceed as above, but are choſe by the Church as anſwering to 1 Tim. 3.

gave Abraham * faith; but it was by ſpeaking ſee Gen 22. 18. " And in thy ſeed " &c. ſo now faith comes by hearing only; and hearing by the—*word* of God. In order to confirm this truth, and at the ſame time take off the gloſſes that are caſt on the words of Chriſt here; we ſhall take the following method 1ſt. To ſhew that it was the Diſciples he ſpoke to there. 2dly. That it was the extraordiary gift of the Spirit he there alludes to. 3dly. That it was they to whom it was promiſed, and more particularly they, who were exhorted to pray and wait for the accompliſhment of the Promiſe. And 4ly ſhall ſhew when the Promiſe was fulfill'd. And 5thly and laſtly ſhall ſhew the reaſon why the Holy Ghoſt was ſo given to them, and ſo conclude with a few remarks on the whole. And firſt, that it was the Diſciples he ſpoke to there, appears from the preceding part of the Chapter as well as from the Text itſelf, Verse, the firſt, " One of his Diſciples ſaid unto him " Lord teach us to pray as John alſo taught his Diſciples " &c. After having taught them, he proceeds to a ſimile or a parable on the ſubject, and deduces from thence the ſtrong argument the Text contains to the duty of prayer. " If ye then being † evil know how to give good gifts to your Children, how much more ſhall not your heavenly Father give &c. " The relation according to the text, they ſtand into God, as his Children, ſufficiently proves this Propoſition: *viz* that it was the Diſciples only, he addreſſes in this Exhortation. And if we regard the Scriptures; we ſhall find that it is the real Diſciples and followers

* It is too common when people cannot ſupport their contmpt of the Word, to cry out that faith is the gift of God, and we muſt wait and pray for it &c. It's granted in the ſenſe above but in no other, for as it is the belief of the Truth it can have no ſeparate exiſtance from that Truth. And the way it comes is not by praying, but by " Hearing and hearing by the word of God, " Romans 10, 17.

† A proof this that there is no perfection but only in Chriſt Jeſus, in whom God is well pleaſed.

followers of Chriſt only that are the proper Subjects of Exhortation: both to this, and every other Chriſtian duty." For whatſoever is not of faith is ſin, " and without * faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. " Let all the followers of Chriſt learn then, to be *inſtant in prayer.*

2dly That it was the extraordinary gift of the Spirit the Lord alludes to here, apears from theſe conſiderations, firſt, the Context and coherence of the place ſpeaks for this ſenſe, for in the next verſe it is ſaid, " And he was caſting out a Devil and it was dumb, and it came to paſs when the Devil was gone out, the dumb ſpeak, and the people wondered. " Second, tho' the Diſciples could by the power and authority of Jeſus Chriſt do Miracles *Luke* 9. 1. 2 and had received the Spirit of truth, for they confeſs him the Chriſt of God, *Luke* 9. 20, yet had they not received it as the pledge or § token of the full comencement of Chriſt's New Teſtament Church or Kingdom; not in the ſenſe intended by Chriſt in the Text; for he encourages them to pray for it: therefore it was a thing under future Expectation; and ſo muſt be the extroardinary gift of the Spirit in the ſenſe of *John* 7. 39. " But this ſpake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him *ſhould* receive, for the Holy-ghoſt WAS NOT YET GIVEN becauſe that Jeſus was not yet glorified.

Having clear'd this, we ſhall proceed next to the 3d prop. *viz.* That it was the Diſciples who had the promiſe of the Extraordinary gift of the Spirit, and who were in particular commanded to pray and wait for it *Luke* 24. 49. ſufficiently proves this, And behold (ſays Jeſus to his Diſciples) I ſend the promiſe of my Father upon you; but tarry ye at Jeruſalem until ye be endowed with power from an high. Thus we ſee it was the Apoſtles to whom the promiſe was made, and who were

* Hence appears the abſurdity of thoſe Teachers who inſtead of directing their ignorant Fellowers to the Lord Jeſus as a propitiation through faith in his Blood, direct them to pray and do &c. That God may be gracious, &c.

§ It is made an evidance of the Churches being no more as it were in the ſtate of a Minor under the diſcipline of Moſes, Gal. 4, 6, 7.

were in particular commanded to wait for it's accomplishment. The said promise we find repeated *John* 14. 16. It was to § remain a comforter with them in his stead, and verse the 26 " But the comforter which is the Holy-ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. *Chap.* 16. 7, 8 the promise is a gain repeated verse 14 He shall glorify me saith Christ, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. Accordingly we find when the Apostles had received it, speaking by their mouths the Spirit glorified not himself by ascribing Salvation to any of his opperations on the human mind, but the person and work of Christ alone. see Acts, 2. 32. 36. According to the direction of their Lord, *Luke* 24. 49 we find the Apostles after his resurrection *Acts* 1. 12 returned to Jerusalem, " and when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter and James, and John, and Andrew; Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew; James the son of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the Brother of James. These all continu'd with one accord in prayer and supplication &c. no doubt, for the fulfilment of the promise. Prayer should be always grounded on some promise, otherwise it is only tempting of God.

Which brings us to the 4th. Prop. *viz* When was this promise fulfilled? Their prayer was heard, and the promise fulfilled ON THE DAY OF PENTICOST. " This appears from *Acts*, 2. 1, 2, 3, 4 " and when the " day of Penticost was fully came, they were all with " one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a " sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing Wind, and " it filled all the House where they were sitting. And " there appear'd unto them cloven Tongues like as of " fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all " fill'd with the Holy-ghost and began to speak with o- " ther Tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. " It is

§ And now he abides with the Church as their comforter in the Apostolic word. And is called the Spirit of Adoption as opposed to the Law or Spirit of bondage that engenders fear, see Rom. 8, 15.

is likewiſe farther apparent from the Apoſtle's application of the Propheſy of Joel to that event, *verſe* 16. (ſays Peter) this is that which was ſpoken by the Prophet Joel. And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, ſaith God, I will power out of my Spirit upon all fleſh, (that is the Gentile diſciples alſo who in the Apoſtolic age received the like gift, ſee Chap. 10. 45. and 19. 6) and your ſons and your Daughters ſhall Propheſy &c.

Thus we ſee the time of the fulfilment of this promiſe of the Spirit power'd out on the Apoſtles and primitive Elders of the Church, was the day of *Penticoſt*. *verſe* the 39 is no objection, nor argument for the continuance of the ſaid gifts of the Holy-ghoſt in the ſenſe the Apoſtles had them, for both Experience and Scripture ſhews they are * ceaſed ſee Cor. 13. 8 but it rather ſhews agreeable to *John* 14. 16 that he is the Churche's abiding comforter in the promiſe of life made known in the goſpel, as before obſerv'd.

Now we come to the 5th Prop. Why did God give the Holy-ghoſt in ſuch a manner to the Apoſtles? there is a beauty and order in all the Divine proceedings, and in nothing more ſo, than in this. The reaſon why he did ſo, the Lord himſelf aſſigns *Luke* 24. 48 " And ye are Witneſſes of theſe things, " that is of all he did and ſuffered, and of his reſurection from the dead. And ſee Acts 2. 32 this Jeſus hath God raiſed up whereof we all are Witneſs Chap. 3. 14, 15 " But ye denied the holy one and the juſt, and deſired a Murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raiſed from the dead; whereof WE ARE WITNESSES. and Chap. 4. 33 " and with great power gave the Apoſtles Witneſs of the reſurrection of the Lord Jeſus. and Chap. 5. 30, 31, 32 The Holy-ghoſt thus

* It's manifeſt the gifts are ceaſed, tho' not the pretenſions to them; The impoſition of hands with " Receive thou the Holy-ghoſt " are ſtrong pretentions but unleſs they could do miracles themſelves and beſtow that Power on others as the Apoſtles did their pretentions to theſe things muſt in the Eye of reaſon be deem'd * * * And yet if the caſe of G. Lukins mentioned in the Public Papers June 24 1788 be a truth, we may hope to ſee the clergy more conſiſtent with their claims.

thus given, is made a conjoined Evidence with the Apoſtles both of Chriſt's reſurection and of the ‡ Truth of the Goſpel they preach'd. That Truth they preached, and ſtill do in their writings is, *that God hath raiſed Jeſus our Lord from the dead.* That in his name is preached to men of every Nation, remiſſion of ſins and eternal Life. *That there is Salvation in no other.* That by him all that believe are JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes. "

Now as it was neceſſary that the Pentateuch of Moſes ſhould be eſtabliſhed in the field of Zoan in Egypt, ſo it was neceſſary this Truth ſhould be confirm'd in the midſt of it's Enemies, as the Apoſtles were Gods Witneſſes choſen and appointed of God to § conſumate divine revelation, ſo theſe gifts of the Holy-ghoſt were neceſſary to qualify them for their Office.

Accordingly Chriſt ſays when ſpeaking of the Spirit " he ſhall bring all things to your remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you. " ſo likewiſe we are told that God bear them Witneſs both with ſigns and wonders and with divers Miracles, and gifts of the Holy-ghoſt according to his own will, *Heb* 2, 4, ——thus we ſee the end and deſign of God giving the Apoſtles &c. the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.

Now to conclude with a few remarks on the whole. Remark 1ſt. Was it the Diſciples the Lord ſpoke to in the text? This ſhould be a caution to us how we apply or adopt the Scriptures, leſt we reſt them to our own dowruction as many do. 2d. Was it the Extraordinary gift of the holy-Ghoſt he encourages them to pray for as afore conſidred? How abſurd and ridiculous muſt it be to pray

‡ Whoever receives that Truth, the Apoſtles preach, receives the Spirit. They deceive themſelves who profeſs to believe that Record, and yet wait for ſome other Spirit, to witneſs their intereſt in Chriſt.

§ The Expoſition of the Old Teſtament given by the Apoſtles in the New, is a compleat Syſtem of Truth. So that we ſtand in need of no human Expoſitions as they in general turn out oppoſitions, to ſome part or other of thoſe Sacred records.

pray or wait for the Spirit now in the ſame way, as many do? 3dly. Had the Apoſtles the Promiſe of God to warrant their petitions? They had, as well as his encouragement to the duty. Let us then be as ſure of the former, in all our petitions as we are of the latter. i e, let us be as ſure we aſk nothing but what is agreeable to his will made known in the promiſe of his word, as we are that he exhorts us to the duty; and we may be ſure that he heareth us; nay having this ground (the Promiſe of God) we may ſay thro' faith we have the petition that we deſired, *John*, 5, 14, 4thly. Was the Apoſtles prayer anſwer'd, and the promiſe fulfiled on the day of Penticoſt? Let us be encouraged from hence to be inſtant in prayer. Gird up the loyns of our mind, be ſober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.

The divine faithfulneſs is matter of comfort and encouragement here. For ſo ſure as God ſent the Meſiah to finiſh tranſgreſſion; make reconcilation for iniquity, and bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs, and the Holy ghoſt to teſtify of him and enable the Apoſtles to be his Witneſſes; ſo ſure will he come again according to his Promiſe to the eternal conſolation of all that look for him.

5thly. and laſtly. Was the deſign of God in giving the Holy-ghoſt to the Apoſtles as he did, to make them his Witneſſes to the people, to conſumate divine Divine Revelatiou, and ratify that Revelation to future Ages? Then the Apoſtles alone are the Standards of Orthodoxy, and have the prerogative to ſay he that is of God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us. Then we have a certain rule to try the Spirits by. Hence we may ſee the propriety of thoſe Words *ye are the Light of the World* and whoſoever ſins ye remit they are remitted unto them. Likewiſe the impropriety, aſſuming pride, and boaſting arrogancy of thoſe who pretend to be the Apoſtles ſucceſſors, and yet ſucceed them no otherways, than as darkneſs ſucceeds the Light. God never bore Witneſs to them as to the Apoſtles; their Authority therefore is nothing but uſurpation. Was we to regard the many lo! her's; and lo! ther's! who pretend to clerical Authority, and a ſeparate Spirit, what a Sea of

uncertainty

uncertainty ſhould we float on? But beloved ſays the Apoſtle believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God; never was there more need of this caution than now. The iniquitious traditions of the Gentile Church about the Spirit, being almoſt arrived to as high a pitch as that of the Jews about their Oral Law. Chriſt tells them that by their traditions they "had made the word of God of no effect." To what an enormous height this was carried by that people; ſee Prideaux in his Conec &c. Vol 2 Page 464 and 465 &c. Did they reckon the written Law as a dead Letter in compariſon of the traditionary one? So do the generality of Chriſtians ſo called, in compariſon to what they call the Spirit and his work. The powerful word of God a dead Letter till annimated by their Spirit! amazing impiety this. I call it theirs, becauſe I know of no other Spirit but that which ſpeaks in the Scriptures. The Letter or Law itſelf is not dead; for Paul ſays *it killeth*, but the Spirit or Goſpel he ſaith giveth Life. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6 "The Goſpel of Chriſt (the Apoſtle ſays *Rom* 1. 16) is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth," may we ever reſt in it as ſuch! for by a parity of reaſon, they who are waiting or looking for any other Power, are of the Number of them that believe not. If the above hints tend to undeceive ſuch, and awaken their attentions to the Scriptures; guard the Children of the Truth againſt the Enthuſiaſm of the preſent day, I have my deſire in writing and ſhall conclude in thoſe words of the Evangeliſt, and which I think ſufficiently ſupports all I have ſaid of the ſufficiency of Gods revelation, to beget or give us an underſtanding. *John* 20, 31. But theſe are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and in believing might have Life through his Name.

F I N I S.

APHORISM IIt.

On Free will.

The mind of Man in the reception of reports whether human, or divine; is *paſſive*, and the report ſtſelf, in either caſe, is the *Power*, the only *power* of believing; and not any thing ſeparate or abſtract from it.

IIdly. Hence that obſolete ſtuff " free will " has no real exiſtence, or meaning. The goſpel of Chriſt is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth. *Rom.* 1. 16, And as to thoſe who overlook it in queſt of ſome other; they are blinded by Satan's lie which is his Power by which he leads them captive at his will.

IIIdly. Therefore they who periſh, are not ſaid to periſh thro' the decrees of God, or for want of ſome other Power than his word; but for the Unbelief or Rejection of that ſame *word* which is the Power of God. ſee Heb. 4. 19, So we ſee they could not enter in BECAUSE of unbelief.

IVthly. The *word* and *Spirit* are Synonous terms in Scripture both as applied to Creation, and Converſion. 1ſt. On Creation it is attributed to the WORD, ſee Gen. 1. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14. *Pſalms* 33, 6. " By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made and all the Hoſt of them by the Breath of his Mouth, " verſe 9." He ſpoke and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt." The ſame is attributed to the Spirit. ſee Gen. 1. 2, 8, *Pſalms* 104. 30, " He ſent forth his Spirit and they were Created. "
2dly. On converſion, it is call'd a Spiritual birth or a being born of the Spirit *John* 3. 8, and 1ſt. *Peter* 1. 23, calls it a " being born again, not of corruptible, but incorruptible ſeed, the WORD of God."

Vthly. It is evident therefore that they who deny the ſufficience of the divine word to give us an underſtanding, do in effect deny the ſufficience of Chriſts work to ſave:

As it is evident we know nothing of the former, but by the latter.

On Redemption.

VIthly. The Apoſtles in preaching Redemption, neither preach general, nor particular Redemption in the ſenſe or connexion of any human Syſtem,

but Salvation, or Juſtification by God's Grace thro' the Redemption that is *in* Chriſt Jeſus.

VIIthly. The Apoſtolic account is, that "God hath ſet him forth as a Propitiation thro' *faith*." Hence it's plain, if we ſay either more, or leſs of God's deſigns to ſave by the death of his Son, than what agrees therewith, we either more or leſs pervert, or of corrupt the truth. From which it appears, the Scriptures ſuit no human Syſtem, without the Aſſiſtance of human Art, to adjuſt, or rather manufacture them to it.

VIIIthly. The Number of the Redeem'd then exactly correſponds with the Apoſtolic account, or doctrine of Chriſt as a propitiation thro' faith, and can be neither more or leſs than juſt ſo many as by THEIR Teſtimony are begotten again to a lively hope by the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead.

IXthly. Now as the national Church of the Jews had no exiſtence as ſuch, but from the Loins of Abraham and the 12 Patriarchs thro' carnal generation; ſo that holy Nation that is Spiritual, and keeperh the Truth, has no exiſtence as ſuch, but from the word of the 12 Apoſtles of the Lamb, the incorruptible ſeed, the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. It is this that conſtitutes their faith unfeigned, of the operation of God, or moſt holy faith. Conſequently their Election from the reſt of the World is thro' Sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth according to 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 1.

Xthly. Hence it appears that none are the Elect or choſen of God to Salvation but in him; i. e. Chriſt Jeſus the ſecond Adam. Which words IN HIM takes in their Exiſtence in time, and not only ſo, but their intereſt in, or Union with him by faith. From whence it follows, that all in the firſt Adam, or a State of nature, are in an equal State of *Reprobation*, the Apoſtles, and whole Church while in that State, Children of wrath even as others: ſee Ephe. 2. 3, all the Revelation of God ſupports this view of Election and Reprobation, and when ever it is otherwiſe ſtated, we have reaſon to ſuſpect that it is not the Scriptural doctrine of Election, but Zeno's plan of fate metamorphoſed.